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Meta won't release its multimodal Llama AI model in the EU / Meta says the European regulatory environment is too 'unpredictable.'

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Illustration by Nick Barclay / The Verge

Meta says it won't be launching its upcoming multimodal AI model — capable of handling video, audio, images, and text — in the European Union, citing regulatory concerns. The decision will prevent European companies from using the multimodal model, despite it being released under an open license.

“We will release a multimodal Llama model over the coming months, but not in the EU due to the unpredictable nature of the European regulatory environment,” Meta spokesperson Kate McLaughlin said to *The Verge*.

Just last week, the EU finalized compliance deadlines for AI companies under its strict new AI Act. Tech companies operating in the EU will generally have until August 2026 to comply with rules around copyright, transparency, and AI uses like predictive policing.

Meta’s decision follows a similar move by Apple, which recently said it would likely exclude the EU from its Apple Intelligence rollout due to concerns surrounding the Digital Markets Act. Meta has also halted plans to release its AI assistant in the EU and paused its generative AI tools in Brazil — both due to concerns raised about data protection compliance.

A text-only version of Meta’s Llama 3 model will still reportedly launch in the EU

Meta says its multimodal AI models will be utilized in products like the Meta Ray-Ban smart glasses. According to Axios, Meta's EU snub will also extend to future multimodal AI model releases but excludes a larger, text-only version of the Llama 3 model that Meta says *will* be available for EU customers.

That still leaves a difficult situation for companies outside the EU who were hoping to provide products and services that use these models, as they'll be prevented from offering them in one of the world's largest economic markets.

The EU hasn't commented on Meta's decision at the time of writing. Apple's decision to potentially restrict its AI deployment was blasted by the EU's competition commissioner, Margrethe Vestager.

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